

## **SUMMARY OF AMENDMENT IN THE NATURE OF A SUBSTITUTE DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY FIRST RESPONDER GRANT PROGRAM**

### **Authorizes DHS to administer a single First Responder Grant Program, under the Emergency Preparedness and Response (EP&R) Directorate.**

- Pre-9/11 grant programs (FIRE, COPS, etc.) are not affected.
- Grant applications based on building “essential capabilities,” consistent with State plans
- Funding applications are prioritized based on the extent to which they build essential capabilities
- Requires DHS—in evaluating grant applications—to build essential capabilities nationwide. Does not direct funding only to areas of high threat.
- Program administered by Office for Domestic Preparedness (ODP), which is moved to EP&R

### **Creates an independent, State and local Task Force on Essential Capabilities for First Responders.**

- Task Force develops methodology for local and state governments to determine “essential capabilities” (e.g., personnel, equipment, training, etc.) needed to be prepared for a terrorist attack
- Requires the integration of DHS threat and vulnerability assessments into the determination of essential capabilities.
- Requires States to develop comprehensive preparedness plans based on assessments of their need for additional essential capabilities

### **Allows both States and eligible regions of States to apply for grant funds.**

- Maintains requirement for 80% pass-through of grant funds.
- Waives 25% cost-sharing requirement for first 2 years of program, and allows for “in-kind” match to meet cost-share requirements.
- Defines eligible regions as: (1) encompassing an area of not less than 20,000 square miles or including a population of at least 1.65 million; or (2) areas certified as regions by DHS, with the consent of both the State/States in which they are located, and the incorporated jurisdictions within the region.

### **Authorizes grant funding to be used for all essential capabilities.**

- Planning, training, exercises, and equipment
- Communications: Development or enhancement of emergency operations centers, developing or enhancing processes and facilities for classified/unclassified information sharing, and interoperable communications equipment.
- Personnel: allows grant funds to be used for additional personnel costs due to elevations in the threat alert level, and personnel costs for travel to and participation in exercises and training, as well as backfill costs for these personnel.

### **Development of Training and Equipment Standards.**

- Requires consultation with national standards organizations (NFPA, ANSI, NIST, etc.) in developing standards.
- Science and Technology Directorate to develop national standards for first responder equipment
- Emergency Preparedness and Response Directorate to develop national standards for first responder training

### **Reforms Color-Coded Advisory System.**

- Requires DHS to reform the multi-colored threat advisory system to issue warnings by geographical areas and/or industrial sectors, based on specific threat information.

### **Improves Coordination of Private Sector and Volunteer Resources**

- Creates “Office for Citizen Preparedness” in EP&R Directorate to link private sector resources with emergency response and administer the Citizen Corps and other volunteer programs.